

AGENDA ITEM

AREA COMMITTEE: WEST LUTON AREA
DATE: 24th JANUARY 2005
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH SERVICE
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING (HEAD OF
COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT)
CONTACT OFFICERS: RICHARD FENSOME 696355
SHIRLEY TAYLOR 494417

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: LEWSEY, LEAGRAVE, CHALLNEY

PURPOSE

1. Progress up-date of Community Education and Development Division's (incorporating community development and youth service) initiatives and projects impacting in the area.

BACKGROUND

2. Areas of responsibility:-
 - a. Richard Fensome – Centre Manager
 - b. Shirley Taylor – Centre Manager
 - c. Cathy Hackett – Community Development Officer
 - d. Bob Baker – Senior Area Youth Worker
 - e. Allan Mwangi Johnson – Neighbourhood Renewal Worker

REPORT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Lewsey Community Centre

Staffing

3. Lewsey Community Centre despite continued staffing level problems continues to provide a wide programme of activities and events for all the community, which is commendable.

50+ Bowls League

4. The 50+ Bowls League started on Friday 15th October and runs every Friday until 15th April 2005. Fourteen teams entered from all over Luton. Staff at Lewsey Centre will send regular updates of positions and scores to date so far in the league, and the latest was sent just before Christmas.
5. New fenders have been purchased for the regular meetings of 50+ bowls group and for the League games.

Play schemes

6. The October half term playschemes were well attended and provided a good mix of activities for the 5-12 year olds of the Area.

Ballet & Tap

7. Members of our Ballet & Tap classes worked hard over the past few months in preparation for their performances in Vanessa's Cinderella Production. There were four shows, which were well attended and well received at the All Saints Church over the October half term period.

Annual Awards

8. Another successful Annual Awards evening took place on Saturday 16th October 2004 at Lewsey Community Centre and was attended by approximately 270 people including the new Deputy Mayor Councillor Abid Hussain, M.P. for Luton North Kelvin Hopkins and local Councillor Tom Shaw. Ex England International and Milton Keynes Lions Basketball Player, Leon Noel presented the awards. Fifty-five awards were presented to the children from Ballet & Tap, Gymnastics, Ju Jitsu, Tae Kwondo, Swimming, Cheerleading and Boxing clubs of Lewsey Community Centre. The evening finished off with a disco/karaoke and buffet for all the grandparents, parents and children to enjoy.

Lewsey Community Development

Lewsey Kitchen Garden Project

9. Plans are underway to prepare the garden for the long and continuing cold winter, after which re-planting will take place for Summer 2005. In conjunction with North Chilterns Trust, it is hoped that new food growing courses can be arranged for 2005, either at the Learning Centre or at Lewsey Community Centre

using the garden for the practical sessions. The Luton & Dunstable Hospitals Dietetic Department, Saheyli group, and CMHSU group remain involved in the upkeep of the garden. Some of the produce during 2004 was used to supplement meals supplied to the CMHSU Group.

Youth Club

10. Youth Club started back on the 11th October 2004 and now meets on Mondays and Wednesdays as opposed to Mondays and Tuesdays. The centre and the staff have experienced some problems since it has started back, which hopefully will be resolved through meetings with the Area Youth Worker, Youth Club Workers and staff.

Christmas Fayre

11. The Christmas Fayre was held on Saturday 27th November 2004. There were 25 stalls on the day, three of which were given free of charge to local organisations. Over 282 people came through the door and 90 children came to see Father Christmas in his grotto, £451.30 was raised. Most of the staff contributed food and drink to sell in the canteen and this is where 2nd largest amount of money was raised out of the total, the most being raised from the raffle. Members of staff and volunteer workers helped to make the day a success. Money raised at the Fayre helped to fund the Children's Christmas Extravaganza to purchase presents etc. it also helped to fund the Carol Concert and will help to fund further projects and enable the purchase of equipment for the centre.

Carol Concert

12. A very successful Carol Concert was held on Sunday 12th December 2004. There was a wonderful turnout of Children along with their families, friends and members of the public. Participants contributing towards the fun filled evening included local schools Halyard High School, Ferrars and Southfields Junior Schools and Chantry Primary School; Huskerettes, Seventh Day Adventists Church, and not forgetting the audience. 200+ people attended the event, including His Worship the Deputy Mayor Councillor Abid Hussain, MP for Luton North Kelvin Hopkins and his wife, also Local Councillor Tom Shaw and his wife. The concert lasted approximately an hour and a quarter and afterwards refreshments were given to all the participating groups and the audience, including mince pies and sherry.

Children's Christmas Extravaganza

13. Another successful Children's Christmas party was held at the Lewsey Centre on Tuesday 21st December 2004, 3.00 - 6.00pm. This event was attended by sixty three 5- 10-year-old children. For the first hour Funny Faces Clowning Duo Sonny & Rainbow, performed Circus Skills, magic tricks and Balloon Modelling, e.t.c. Refreshments including , hotdogs, sweets crisps and drinks were then given to the children. After which their enjoyment continued with games and competitions, during a two hour disco supplied by Funny Faces, Sonny & Rainbow. Three Playleaders helped to make the afternoon run smoothly along with members of staff and volunteers. Last but not least, Father Christmas arrived, and each child received a present from him.

Hockwell Ring Community Centre

Children's Christmas Party

14. Centre Staff organised what turned out to be a very successful Children's Christmas Party on 21st December 2004, to which 37 children attended. It was aimed at 5 – 10 year olds. The party included an entertainer, party games, and refreshments. The party ended with Father Christmas bringing presents. The Father Christmas was non other than Mr Bob Baker – Area Youth Officer. All the children appeared to enjoy themselves and the centre has since received an email from a parent thanking staff for organising the party, which staff hope will be just the first of many more.

Local Empowerment Fund Project

15. Luton Borough Council Officers are supporting Voluntary Action Luton on this project. It is still progressing, with a further core group meeting planned for the end of January/beginning of February. If anyone from the Hockwell Ring area is interested in joining the Core Group, please contact the Centre for the meeting date.
16. The idea of this project is to develop a Core Group from the Hockwell Ring area that can feed into the Luton Assembly. Voluntary Action Luton also has monies for a one off project for the area. The Core Group are looking at what the priorities are for the area, in order to ascertain what the project could be.

Urban Contemporary Dance Classes

17. An urban contemporary dance class started a number of weeks ago at the Centre. This is held from 11am – 12noon on Saturday mornings and has proved extremely popular. It is open to children or young people of aged 8 and over.

Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association

18. Recently, I met with Cathy Martin – Development Officer for Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association. They are involved in building new houses on the old Electrolux estate. She was interested in collating information to pass on to new residents that will eventually move into these homes.
19. I organised for Cathy to meet many local people who are involved with groups in the Hockwell/Leagrave area, and passed on as much information as was possible at the time. However, if anyone has any information that they think may be of use to new residents on activities running locally, please contact me at the centre.

Community Hall Relaunch

20. Following the Centres successful Relaunch event for the Community Hall, which was rebuilt following an arson attack in April 2002, centre staff hope to make this an annual event and have provisionally planned to hold the next one on Saturday 16th April 2004. This fun event proved very popular, with many people from the local community coming together to provide, food, competitions, entertainment and displays. It also was a good way of promoting the Centre and the activities

that are run there. If anyone has any ideas or would like to take part, please contact the Centre.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Police Community Support Officer

21. Money is now available and advertising of the post will commence shortly. Launch of this initiative is being organised to coincide with the refurbishment in the Dominic's square. So far commitment from all the partners has been tremendous and Lewsey businesses have so far committed their contribution towards the initiative positively.

Capacity Building Funding.

22. Applications are ready and organisations will be informed in due cause when to apply.

Social Enterprise Project

23. This is a joint venture with Marsh Farm and Lewsey Farm Learning Centre looking at skills in building and construction. So far major progress has been made and information can be obtained at the Lewsey Farm Learning Centre.

Chaul End Community Centre

New Centre

24. Works have now started on the building of the new Chaul End Centre, considerable progress has been made and the outlines of the new centre is clearly visible. Work is on target for the building of the centre to be finished the first/second week of August 2005.

Community Porta Cabin

25. Adult Education Classes continue to run successfully with two of the customers from Downlands accessing the ladies sewing class on a Tuesday. Although the current classes that run do not offer a qualification at the end of the course if people want to take up the opportunity staff are also looking into other courses run by Adult Education that would offer a qualification.
26. Playschemes will continue to run for the younger children 5 – 12 years and will be run by Community Development.
27. Officers have had meetings with Job Club Plus regarding holding outreach surgeries at the centre where local people can make appointments to come in and speak to the staff who in turn can help them to access employment. The centre is also looking to hold advice surgeries through various agencies such as Citizen's Advice Bureau, Benefits Advice etc.
28. Meetings have been held with the Youth Service and officers are now looking into starting a Youth Drop In Session. Youth Workers will come in a work with the young people and they will have a regular programme which will include some issue based work. They will also work to help with personal and social

development. They will bring in different agencies such as Connexions who can offer careers advice and mentoring. Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP) will also be working in a separate session with the young people who have or are experiencing some difficulties and have been referred to YIP, schools, Connexions etc. They also offer mentoring and workshops.

Community Development

29. Officers continue to work closely with the other partners involved in the project including PCT, Social Services etc. They also continue to work very closely with the Design and Development Group for Chaul End to ensure the continued involvement of the local community and the customers and friends of Downlands Day Centre.